

# CHARITON JOURNAL.

C. P. VANDIVER, Ed. and Prop.

KEYTESVILLE, - MISSOURI



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THE reputation of David Rankin as the great cattle and live stock king of Missouri is world-wide known, says the Grant City Times and yet few people actually realize how extensive his operations as an agriculturist really are. He owns 21,700 acres of land in Atchison county and has it divided into ranches of 640 to 3,000 acres. This year Mr. Rankin has 12,000 acres of corn, 1,000 in oats, 320 in wheat and the rest in pasture. He annually feeds about 10,000 head of cattle. His shipments this year will be about 11,250 head, or 624 car loads.

Oh for a chance at a son-of-a-gun who says that a girl who is easily won, never made a good wife since Adam was born nor when scolded for cluttness acknowledged the corn. A slanderer so base deserves not to live on earth among people who ever forgive such liars as he for nothing but death can ever atone for his slanderous breath. But give us a man whose arms are so long, whose words are so wise and affection so strong, that ere he would slander the weakest of maids he'd cut his own throat with the dull-est of blades. A man whose delight is to honor her sex, who never her soul for a moment would vex, who values her love, her purity and sense when she piles on him endless expense. A man such as this we'd give world's to see, for in all the universe wise men agree, no such man has never been found, tho' sought for by many the wide world around.

Did you ever hear of a man trying to lift an unfortunate woman when she falls from the high pedestal of honor and virtue? I think not. When once she trips and falls from the high and honored position, she lands into hell, from which no human hand will stoop to lift her out; husband and father, brother and son are deaf to agonizing cries for mercy, and thrust her from their sight. But on the other hand I have seen men fall as low as it is possible for men to fall; I have seen the wife lift the husband from the gutter and press him to her heart. I have seen the wife follow the husband through this life in a constant whirl of misery and when at the gates of hell they separated, weep when she could go no farther. I have seen the mother follow the son and the sister the brother through paths men had never been known to follow women. Let the angels in heaven be the jury and God Almighty the judge.

Did any one ever hear of a bachelor living for years, or even months, in the same house with a man or woman and refusing to speak to him or her? Did any one ever hear of a maid doing such an absurd thing? Probably not; and yet every little while we hear of a married man or woman going for years without addressing a word to the sharer of his or her joys and sorrows. Such a case has just come to light in New York, the wife having sued for divorce. Think of the absurdity—the downright asininity—of it! Think of resorting to pencil and paper or the deaf and dumb alphabet to say, "Please pass the butter," or "I would like another lump of sugar in my coffee." No single man or woman ever acts so foolish so far as we have heard, while reports of relations of this sort existing between husband and wife are far from being novelties. Is matrimony conducive to such absurdities? Does it make fools of people, or does it simply bring out the foolishness that has always been in them? We do not like to attribute this imbecility to the time-honored institution of matrimony, but there is where we find it. Perhaps we would better say that it is in the matrimonial relations that this particular brand of idiocy finds the best opportunity to display itself. In any event, it shows that some people never get beyond the childhood state mentality.—Sturgeon Leader.

### It Saves the Children.

Chamberlain's Cough Remedy has saved the lives of thousands of croupy children. It is also without an equal for colds and whooping cough. For sale at the City drug store, H. M. Sigloch, proprietor.

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# A Bartered Life

By MARION HARLAND

## CHAPTER I.

It is always a thankless office to give advice in these matters," said Mrs. Charles Romaine, discreetly. "Your brother and I have decided not to attempt to influence you in any way. Constance; not to bias your judgment in favor of or against Mr. Withers. You, as the one most nearly interested in the consequences of your acceptance or refusal of his offer, should surely be able to make up your mind how to treat it and him."

"I should be, as you say," responded the sister-in-law. "But I cannot." She was a handsome woman, in the prime of early maturity, whose face seldom wore, in the presence of others, the perturbed expression that now begloomed it.

"That does not affect the fact of your duty," answered Mrs. Romaine, with considerable severity. "There are times and circumstances in which vacillation is folly—criminal weakness. You have known Mr. Withers long enough to form a correct estimate of his character. In means and in reputation he is all that could be desired, your brother says. Either you like him well enough to marry him, or you do not. Your situation in life will be bettered by an alliance with him, or it will not. These are the questions for your consideration. And excuse me for saying that a woman of your age should not be at a loss in weighing these."

Again Constance had nothing ready except a weak phrase of reluctant acquiescence. "I feel the weight of your reasoning, Margaret. You cannot despise me more than I do myself for my childish hesitancy. Mr. Withers—any sensible and honorable man deserves different treatment. If I could see the way clear before me I would walk in it. But, indeed, I am in a sore dilemma." She turned away, as her voice shook on the last sentence, and affected to be busy with some papers upon a stand.

Mrs. Romaine was just in all her dealings with her husband's sister, and meant, in her way, to be kind. Constance respected her for her excellent sense, her honesty of purpose and action—but she was the last of her friends whom she would have selected, of her free will, as the confidante of such joys and sorrows as shrink to be confessed to unsympathizing ears. Her heart and eyes were very full now, but she would strangle sooner than drop a tear while those cold, light orbs were upon her.

In consideration of the weakness and ridiculous sensitiveness of her companion, Mrs. Romaine forbore to speak the disdain she felt at the irresolution and distress she could not comprehend. "Is Mr. Withers personally disagreeable to you?" she demanded, in her strong contralto voice.

"I liked him tolerably well—very well, in fact, until he told me what brought him here so regularly," Constance stammered. "Now I am embarrassed in his presence—so uneasy that I wish sometimes I could never see or hear of him again."

"Mere shyness!" said Mrs. Romaine. Such as would be pardonable in a girl of seventeen. In a woman of seven-and-twenty it is absurd. Mr. Withers is highly esteemed by all who know him. Your disrelish of his society is caprice, unless—"the marble gray eyes more searching—"unless you have a prior attachment?"

Constance smiled drearily. "I have never been in love in my life, that I know of." "You are none the worse for having escaped an infatuation that has wrecked more women for time and for eternity than all other delusions combined. A rational marriage—founded upon mutual esteem and the belief that the social and moral condition of the parties to the contract would be promoted thereby—is the only safe union. The young, inexperienced and headstrong, repudiate this principle. The mature in age know it to be true. But, as I have said, it is not my intention to direct your judgment. This is a momentous era in your life. I can only hope and pray that you may be guided aright in your decision."

Left to herself to digest this morsel of pious encouragement, Constance drew a low seat to the hearth register, clasped her hands upon her knees, and tried, for the hundredth time that day, to weigh the facts of her position fairly and impartially.

She had been an orphan for eight years, and a resident in the house of her elder brother. Her senior by more than a dozen years, and in the exciting swing of successful mercantile life, he had little leisure for the study of his sister's tastes and traits, when she first became his ward, and conceived the task to be an unnecessary one, now that she was to be a fixture in his family, and appeared to get on smoothly with his wife. In truth, it never occurred to him to lay a disturbing finger upon the finest wheel of the domestic machinery. His respect for his spouse's executive and administrative abilities was exceeded only by her confidence in her own powers. She was never irascible, but he knew that she would have borne down calmly and energetically any attempt at interference in her operations as minister of the interior—the ruler of the establishment he, by a

much-abused figure of speech, called his home. A snug and elegant abode she made of it, and, beholding Constance well dressed and well fed, habitually cheerful and never rebellious, he may be forgiven for not spending a thought upon her for hours together, and when he did remember her, for dwelling the rather upon his disinterested kindness to a helpless dependent than speculating upon her possible and unappeased spiritual appetites.

Poj these, and with other whimsies, Mrs. Romaine had little thought and no charity. Life, with her, was a fabric made up of duties, various and many, but all double-twisted into hempen strength and woven too closely for a shine of fancy or romance to strike through.

She had coincided readily in her husband's plan to take charge of his young sister when her parents died. "Her brother's house is the fittest asylum for her," she had said. "I shall do my best to render her comfortable and contented."

She kept her word. Constance's wardrobe was ample and handsome, her room elegantly furnished, and she entered society under the chaperonage of her sister-in-law. The servants were trained to respect her; the children to regard her as their elder sister. What more could a penniless orphan require? Mrs. Romaine was not afraid to ask the question of her conscience and of heaven. Her "best" was no empty profession. It was lucky for her self-complacency that she never suspected what years of barrenness and longing these eight were to her protegee.

Constance was not a genius—therefore she never breathed even to herself: "I feel like a seed in the cold earth, quickening at heart, and longing for the air." Her temperament was not melancholic, nor did her taste run after poetry and martyrdom. She was simply a young, pretty and moderately well-educated woman, too sensible not to perceive that her temporal needs were conscientiously supplied, and too affectionate to be satisfied with the meager allowance of nourishment dealt out for her heart and sympathies. While the memory of her father's proud affection and her mother's caresses was fresh upon her she had long and frequent spells of lonely weeping—was wont to resign herself in the seclusion of her chamber to passionate lamentations over her orphanage and isolation of spirit. Routine was Mrs. Romaine's watchword, and in bodily exercise Constance conformed to her quiet despotism—visited, studied, worked and took recreation by rule. The system wrought upon her beneficially so far as her physique was concerned. She grew from a slender, pale girl into ripe and healthy womanhood; was more comely at twenty-seven than at twenty-one.

## CHAPTER II.

But all this time she was an hungry. She would cheerfully have refunded to her brother two-thirds of her liberal allowance of pocket money if he had granted to her with its quarterly payment a sentence of fraternal fond-

ness, a token, verbal or looked, that he remembered whose child she was, and that the same mother love had guarded their infancy. Her sister-in-law would have been welcome to withhold many of her gifts of wearing apparel and jewelry had she bethought herself now and then how gratefully kisses fall upon young lips, and that youthful heads are often sadly weary for the lack of a friendly shoulder, or a loving bosom, on which to rest. She did not accuse her relatives of willful unkindness because these were withheld. They interchanged no such unremunerative demonstrations among themselves. Husband and wife were courteous in their demeanor, the one to the other; their children were demure models of filial duty at home and industry at school; the training in both places being severe enough to quench what feeble glimmer of individuality may have been born with the offspring of the methodical and practical parents. Constance found them extremely uninteresting, notwithstanding the natural love for children which led her to court their companionship during the earlier weeks of her domestication in their house. It was next to a miracle that she did not stiffen in this atmosphere into a buckram image of feminine propriety—a prodigy of starch and virtue, such as would have brought calm delight to the well-regulated mind of her exemplar, and effectually chased all thoughts of matrimony from those of masculine beholders. Had her discontent with her allotted sphere been less active, the result would have been certain and deplorable. She was, instead, popular among her acquaintances of both sexes, and had many friends, if few lovers. This latter deficiency had given her no concern until within two years. At twenty-five she opened her eyes in wide amazement upon the thinning ranks of her virgin associates, and began seriously to ponder the causes that had left her unsought, save by two very silly and utterly ineligible swains, whose overtures were, in her esteem, preposterous. She was only too ready to be insulting. Her quick wit and knowledge of the world helped her to a solution of the problem. "I am poor and dependent upon my brother's charity," she concluded, with a new and

stifling uprising of dissatisfaction with her condition. "Men rarely fall in love with such—more rarely woo them." She never spoke the thought aloud, but it grew and strengthened until it received a startling blow from Mr. Withers' proposal of marriage.

He was a wealthy banker from a neighboring city, whom business relations with Mr. Romaine drew to his house and into his sister's company. His courtship was all Mrs. Romaine could desire. His visits were not too frequent, and were paid at stated intervals, as befitted his habits of order and punctuality. His manner to the lady honored by his preference was replete with stately respect that was the antipodes of servile devotion, while his partiality for her society, and admiration for her person, were unmistakable. He paid his addresses through Mr. Romaine as his fair one's guardian, offering voluntarily to give his beloved whatever time for deliberation upon the proposal she desired.

"You had better think it over for a week," advised her brother, when he had laid the case duly before Constance. "It is too serious a matter to be settled out of hand."

After that, neither he nor his wife obtruded their counsel upon her until the afternoon of the seventh day. Then Mrs. Romaine, going to her sister's chamber to communicate the substance of a telegram just received by her husband to the effect that Mr. Withers would call that evening at 8 o'clock, was moved to grave remembrance by the discovery that she whom he came to woo had no answer prepared for him. Constance was no nearer ready after the conversation before recorded.

"I cannot afford to be romantic," she had reminded herself several times. "And who knows but this irrational repugnance may pass away when I have once made up my mind to accept him? This may be—in all likelihood it is—my last chance of achieving an independent position. It has been a long time coming, and my charms will be on the wane soon. True, a marriage with Elnathan Withers is not the destiny of which I have dreamed, but then dreams are but foolish vagaries after all. Life is real and earnest."

She had kept her heart alive upon nothing else for eight years—dreams of home, and love, and appreciation; of liberty to speak out what she had never bled since her mother died, and of being once again, joyously and without reserve, herself. There are no harder specters to lay than these same dreams. Memories, however dear and sacred, are more easily forgotten or dismissed, or smothered by the growth of later ones. If she bade them farewell now, it was for a lifetime. "A lifetime!" she repeated, shivering with a sick chill, and crouching lower over the register. "Maybe ten, maybe twenty—who knows but forty years? It is a tedious slumber of one's heart, and a loveless marriage is a loathsome sepulcher for one's better and real self. A lifetime! and I can have but one! But one! If this step should be ruin and misery, there can be no redemption this side of the grave. His grave, perhaps—just as probably mine!"

To-night, this very hour, she must resist the glittering temptation to fore-swear her womanhood, or murder, with her own hand, the dear visions that had come to be more to her than reality. The winter twilight had fallen early. It was the season best loved by her dream visitors. She had not lied in declaring to her inquirer that she had never been in love, but she confessed that she had equivocated as the shadowy figure of her ideal lover stood beside her in the friendly gloom. Mrs. Romaine would have questioned her sanity had she guessed how the girl had sobbed her griefs into quiet upon his bosom, how talked lowly but audibly to him of her love and the comfort his presence brought. She had never looked into his face, but she should know him in an instant should they two ever meet in the flesh, as they did now daily in spirit. Somewhere in the dim and blessed future he was waiting for her, and she had borrowed patience from the hope. She was to be his wife—the mother of children as unlike the prodigies of repression that lined two sides of her brother's table as cherubs to puppets. She welcomed them to her arms in these twilight trances. They lolled upon her knees, slept in her embrace, strained eager arms about her neck, dappled her cheek with their kisses. Unsubstantial possessions these, but cherished as types of good things—women with faces less fair and affections less ardent than hers. If the Great Father was good and merciful, and the Rewarder of them who put their trust in Him, a true and loving parent, who rejoiced in the happiness of His creatures—all these must be hers at last. If she resigned them now it was a final separation.

"And I can have but one lifetime," she moaned again. Thwarted and fruitless thus far, but still all she had.

The one idea recurred to her with the persistency of a presentiment. The life which God had given, the heart He had endowed!

"If some one, stronger and wiser than I, would only take the responsibility of decision from my soul, would hedge me in on the right and left, I would go forward. As it is, I dare not! I dare not!" She sobbed and wrung her hands in the agonies of irresolution.

"You told Constance about the telegram?" It was her brother speaking in the library below. The sound arose plainly through the open register.

"I did. But I regret to say that she is not yet in the frame of mind we could wish her to carry to the interview with Mr. Withers," said Mrs. Romaine. She always expressed herself with deliberate precision even in conjugal tete-a-tete.

"No?" Constance heard the rustle of the evening paper as Charles laid it down, and the creak of his chair as he confronted his wife. "What is the matter?"

"Some overstrained ideas of the beauty and propriety of reciprocal devotion, I believe. She looks for a hero in a husband, and Mr. Withers has nothing heroic in his appearance or composition."

"He is worth more than half a million, all accumulated by his own talents and industry," returned Mr. Romaine. "Constance cannot be such an egregious simpleton as not to perceive the manifest advantages of this connection to her. I have never complained of the burden of her maintenance, but I have often wondered her own sense of justice and expediency did not urge her to put forth some effort at self-support. There is but one way in which she can do this. She is not sufficiently thorough in any branch of literature, or any accomplishment, to become a successful teacher. In the event of my death or failure in business she would be driven to the humiliating resource of taking in sewing for a livelihood, or to seek the more degrading position of a saleswoman in a store. Her future has been a source of much and anxious thought with me. This marriage would, I hoped, quiet my apprehensions by settling her handsomely in life. If she refuses Withers I shall be both angry and disappointed. She is old enough to leave off school-girl sentimentality."

The listener put out her foot and shut the register noiselessly. She had had a surfeit of disagreeable truth for that time.

Yet it was truth, every word of it. She was a mean-spirited hanger-on to her brother. She was incapable of earning a livelihood by other means than those he had named. Her mode of life from her infancy had unfitted her for toil and privation, such as must be hers were her plain-spoken benefactor to die to-morrow. Nor had she the moral nerve to defy public opinion, to debar herself from accustomed associations and pleasures by entering the ranks of paid laborers. Hesitation was at an end. The wish that had been almost a prayer in solemn sincerity was answered fearfully soon, and she would offer no appeal. Her destiny was taken out of her hands. There was no more responsibility, no more struggling. Hedges to the right and to the left bristled with thorns, sharp and thick as porcupine quills. But one path lay open to her feet—a short and straight course that conducted her to Elnathan Withers' arms.

(CONTINUED)

### Too Personal.

A singular dilemma in which a young Washington lady recently found herself is described by the Post of that city as follows: "The young lady is a member of a certain patriotic society, which lately held an 'open meeting.' The woman who had the affair in charge notified each member of the toast she would be expected to respond to ten days or so before the meeting. To one young woman whom, as it happened, she did not know personally, she sent the toast, 'Our Flag.' The young woman received it, and at once went to call on the head of the society, in a state of great distress. She simply could not respond to the toast, she said. She did not know whether a joke was intended, but she had been chaffed unmercifully about it already, and would not go near the meeting if she were to be called on to speak on that subject. 'Why, what on earth is wrong with that subject?' asked the head of the society. The pretty young woman hesitated. She blushed. 'Well,' she said, 'you see, I'm going to marry a man named Flag.'"

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